



The more 'contemporary' the style of your upholstered seating, the lower the seat will be.

Don't take seating for granted



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DESIGN BASICS

Chairs and sofas are staple items in all our homes, the investment we make in them will determine the style and comfort of our homes. It is important to make the right choice upfront if you want to make the most

of what these pieces of furniture can offer.

The quality of the structure will certainly determine the price point. Like most other things in life, you get what you pay for.

Both sofas and chairs have many 'parts.' Therefore, if you want it to last get something which is sturdy, made of kiln-dried hardwood, outfitted with corner blocks and is glued and screwed in the case of wood, not stapled.

Though the signature of quality upholstery is eight-way hand tied springs, sinuous S-shaped springs will provide you with high quality and super comfort. When I commission custom dining chairs for my clients, I will ask for a seat which has eight-way hand tied springs. You will never want to get away from that dining table conversation sitting on one of these chairs.

After structure, the next consideration is the covering of the chair or sofa. Choosing between leather or fabric is often a dilemma which I am caught in when 'counselling' a couple for whom I am working.

Quality leather is timeless and easy to maintain, while fabric adds warmth, texture, pattern and more visual interest. In the end, it is a personal choice which has to be determined by your

needs and goals for the space.

Sofas and chairs in the same conversation area should coordinate and complement each other. This is a very broad statement because you can certainly choose a clean, contemporary sofa and pair it with a super traditional French-Style chair with great success.

I love the contrast of new and old together, it allows each piece to shine in its glorious style. I prefer the combination of a sofa with two chairs over a loveseat (average 54" wide) because it allows for more decorating flexibility. You can always move the two chairs apart, have them side by side or across from each other.

Now the rules: A perfect sofa is generally about 37" deep, 84" wide with a back height of 30" to 34", a seat height of 16" to 18" and an arm height of 24" off the floor. The perfect side chair has a seat height of 19" depth of 19" width of 20", back height of 32" to 34" and armrest of at least 2" in order for your arms to be comfortable.

Of course, when it comes to chairs, there are side chairs which are more upright, and then there are lounge chairs which tend to be as deep as a sofa. Which-ever set of seating options you choose, make it the best quality that you can afford and the fabric that best suits your lifestyle.

Other tips:

- Choose a solid, neutral fabric for your sofa, while your chairs can be a snazzy fabric with some personality.

Throw some pillows on the sofa in a fabric which coordinates with the chairs.

- Two chairs are a better investment than a loveseat. Ask yourself: 'How many people ever sit on a loveseat?' Usually only one, which means you are better to have two chairs which is also more flexible for design purposes.

- General rule: The more 'contemporary' the style of your upholstered seating, the lower the seat will be.

These are all general rules which can begin your understanding of the ergonomics of seating, now go out there,

take your tape measure and 'have a seat' on a whole bunch of sofas and chairs to figure out what works for you.

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The bergère chair is a large arm chair usually associated with the French Country style of decorating and is often displayed with a matching ottoman or stool.



Two important considerations when selecting a chair? Choose the best quality that you can afford and the fabric that best suits your lifestyle.